



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Advent's Hope

Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you. (Psalm 33:22-22, ESV)

The snow is falling around the Great Lakes, which means the outdoor golf season is over.

Throughout my golf story, even during my tour days, I took a five- to six-week golf sabbatical during the holiday season. My body still knows this rhythm, a seasonal cycle that started way back in childhood, when I turned my attention to basketball and downhill skiing once the cold weather arrived.

I tried to walk away from golf altogether after retiring from the LPGA Tour in 2009, but golf never walked away from me. After several years of hating golf, I started a journey back to competitive “senior” golf. My first few tournaments were a disaster, and my hope for wanting to keep playing spiraled into a slow death until two things happened.

First, my therapist helped me see that I have a choice about whether to play golf at this stage of my life—a much different perspective than the burden of expectations that followed me during my college and tour days.

Secondly, a sports chaplain challenged me to consider that it isn't what I can do for God through golf, but rather, it is what God wants to do in me through playing golf. God will take care of the rest. After several decades of believing I had to use my “Christian Professional Athlete” platform for God, I felt a long exhale.

Hope flickered again as I considered I am choosing to play competitive golf, and God's steadfast love is still using golf to draw me closer to him and continues to smooth out my rough edges.

The Advent season began four days ago, and hope is this week's theme. The Bible Project (bibleproject.com) describes Advent as “A four-week season of remembering and celebrating the arrival of Jesus on Earth. It's a time to reflect on the unexpected nature of Jesus' humble birth and join in the anticipation of when he will come again to reunite Heaven and Earth once and for all.”

With so many unknowns in our world right now, hope might feel far away. In the Bible Projects' Advent series, biblical hope is defined as “Trusting in God's character and choosing hope despite our circumstances.”

What does “trusting in God's character” mean to you?

Where has God's steadfast love been upon your life?

Is there room to choose to hope and feel anticipation as you reflect on the story of our Savior's birth this Advent season?

Prayer: Lord, Father, how I need your steadfast love to open my heart to hope. Help me feel your steadfast love in my story and as I reflect on Jesus this Advent season.

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